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ABSTRACT

This book explains how the use of video display terminals (VDTs) has been detrimental to women in the work force and has led to widespread health and safety problems. Chapter 1 discusses the development and scope of occupational illnesses associated with VDT work. Chapter 2 analyzes the power relationship between labor and capital in the office that produced the hazards of VDT work. The subject of Chapter 3 is organized labor's largely unsuccessful attempts to organize female office workers and negotiate occupational safety and health agreements with business. Chapter 4 shows how cooperation with the corporate media helped the computer industry get its message out. Chapters 5 and 6 discuss how both corporate and governmental use of nondecision-making tactics kept ergonomic and nonionizing radiation issues from being fully addressed and resolved at the federal level. Chapter 7 explains how the Reagan administration used the Office of Management and Budget to interfere with an epidemiological study of VDT workers and subordinate safety and health policy to its goal of deregulating business. Chapter 8 examines why many state government officials considered VDT regulations a drag on their competitive efforts to attract high technology investment and the consequences for labor's legislative campaign. Chapter 9 presents conclusions and recommendations for reform. Appendixes include notes, 205-item bibliography, and index. (YLB)

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